1:Sanders Z-5H (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos
[Shepherds]

children, pots and pans, donkeys, and a few articles of clothing left them after destruction of their village by the Communist guerrillas several years earlier.

A later April day found us again in Tripolis. On the road we had once more been encountering flocks from Valtetsi, but this time they were headed up toward home. Fortunately, Stephanos Agriopoulos, our favorite waiter in the Reed Restaurant, had relatives in Valtetsi and was eager to take us there. We left the main highway at the new tuberculosis hospital, turning toward the mountains on our right. The road was barely passable, evidently the mere widening of a sheep track winding in and out but always up, along the edges of dry, bone dry, ravines. Now and then one of us had to get out to shove a rock from the road. En route Stephanos told us much about the people and the hard economic struggle they were facing. The road became less rocky as we neared the village. There were small fields, brilliant green, with trees along the edges. The trees stood tall around the school and church, the center of the village, where their spring freshness and sturdiness cast a sort of tender protection over the ruined stone houses that were Valtetsi. It was only after we let the people unburden themselves of their more immediate troubles, such as rebuilding their houses, that we could turn to a description of their customary semiannual migration with their flocks.

Valtetsi, with its one hundred eighty families, had not suffered under the German occupation as had so many other Greek villages. Completely off any reasonable facsimile of a road, it was not visited by the invaders; but for this very reason it was frequented by the Communist guerrillas in the 1940s as they struggled for control of Greece. The Communist leaders repeatedly tried to persuade the people to join their side, but the Valtetsi residents refused. In anger at this refusal and with the words, "if you are not for us, you are against us," the Communists descended upon the village one day and killed about one hundred people, mostly men. They burned most of the houses and took the women and children off with them. Each man to whom we talked had some personal tragedy to relate and could show us the name of some close relative or friend on the marble monument by the church erected in honor of these victims of the Communist guerrillas. As a constant reminder of that terrible day, the houses still stood in ruins — six years later. We went from house to house and found that through lack of lumber the second stories had not been built back, nor had there been tile available for the roofs. Many of the families were holed in, as it were, on the first floor, pretty much exposed to the elements during the six months of their sojourn "at home." Yet the people were friendly, glad to see us. Their mobile faces were alive. They smiled easily, were full of curiosity, and bubbled with wit. The state of dilapidation was even more noticeable when the village secretary and president, in order to give us a drink of ouzo "for the road," had to ferret out a bottle and a few

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos

chipped glasses from the dark basement of a roofless building which was serving as the office of the village council.

Around the Valtetsi school that morning were children curious about the strange adults, the car, and the ten-year-old American boy and the twelve-year-old English-speaking Greek boy in our party, who quickly established contact and were soon surrounded. Questions and answers about the children came naturally. When we talked to the two teachers, we began to see what migration meant to these shepherd children. The school year starts in September with everyone enrolled, but by December 1 the youngsters have all set off with their families on the seven- to ten-day tramp below. St. Demetrios' Day (October 28) is the traditional date for departure, and St. George's Day (April 23) is the date for the return. Nevertheless, school opens again on March 1. This year (1953) four pupils had been present then; a week later ten showed up; at the time of our visit business was picking up even more and before long would reach the expected 104 enrollment. Classes would continue to August 15, with only a small break before the September registration occurred.

During the winter pasturing, the children attend no school but help with the flocks as much as they can. We had often during the winter months seen these solitary shepherd children as we drove along a lowland road. As they stood motionless when our car approached, with the sheep and the goats climbing around them, their faded shapeless clothing melting into the barren hillside, they looked neither frightened nor submissive and were quick to respond to a wave or a greeting. Later on, I asked the men with whom I was talking where most of the children were born, in Valtetsi or down below. One of them replied, much to the merriment of his fellows, "They are usually born here, for it's here that the heat wave starts." One man, the proud father of nine, said that all of his had been born in Valtetsi, although each knew of occasions when a child had arrived on the roadside without the ministrations of even a midwife. We asked young and old alike in Valtetsi and elsewhere what the children thought of this semi-annual change. All agreed that such a life was hard on children and that many of them dreaded the long march, but that there was no other livelihood open to their parents.

Since Valtetsi is at an altitude of 3360 feet, its hillsides are too exposed to make the pasturing of many sheep possible; in the winter months, removal to the plains below is therefore the only course of action open to the livestock owner. The families owning goats leave first, since the goats cannot stand the cold and they bear young earlier than do the sheep. Here in Valtetsi, the men pointed out, most of the pastures were communally owned and cost the people nothing; but down below each family had to contract with some peasant proprietor or commune for sufficient pasture for his flock, which now averages about 100 sheep in contrast to the 400

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

A DAY OF WASTENESS AND DESOLATION

diocese of Drama no less than forty of the 112 parish churches were burned down, as well as the monastery of Eikosiphoinisses. 722 727

Elsewhere in Greece, and particularly in those areas traversed by important lines of communication, the number of the homeless mounted steadily as guerilla activity drew savage reprisals upon the villages. One had only to spend a few days in the mountains which lie to the westward of the Thessalian township of Kalambaka, for example, to see something of the effect of these reprisal raids. Church after church was gutted: mere empty shells with fragments of ancient paintings clinging to the tottering walls. In this diocese of Trikka and Staghi alone, twenty-four village churches were completely destroyed during the occupation and many others more or less seriously damaged. Nor did the towns escape the flood of destruction: Edessa, for example, which was set on fire by the Germans on September 12th, 1944, and where five churches perished in the ensuing conflagration, or Iannitsa which suffered a like fate two days later; Larissa, which had scarcely recovered from an earthquake when it was bombed by the Italians, and Kerkyra where more than sixty per cent. of the buildings were destroyed or damaged. 795

After the occupying troops had withdrawn from Greece in the autumn of 1944 and the Communist sedition had met with its first reverse, there ensued a period of comparative tranquillity. The refugees returned to their villages and some progress was made in repairing the damage wrought during the years of occupation. But a greater trial was still to come. From the autumn of 1946 onwards the full violence of the armed sedition which had slowly been gathering its energies since its temporary set-back of December, 1944, was let loose upon the country dioceses. It was utterly out of question for the Greek army, even with the assistance of the gendarmerie and the local militia, to garrison hundreds of isolated hamlets lying in mountainous districts where communications were of the most rudimentary kind. The defence of the northern frontiers presented problems enough and to spare. It was not long, therefore, before the country people were forced to flee from their lands and homes and to seek refuge in those centres which possessed a garrison. Large areas of northern and central Greece were soon abandoned to the roving Communist bands. 722 727 669

Some of the refugees found their way to Athens and Salonica, but the majority crowded with their surviving animals and such few possessions as they had been able to carry with them in their flight into 722 362

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

722 362 the small country towns which serve as centres for the ecclesiastical administration. Here many of them remained for three years. Some, and those the most fortunate, were able to build themselves wooden houses or *kalyvai*; others were lodged in huts; multitudes, especially in Macedonia, lived (often twenty or twenty-five families together) in old Turkish houses; those who fared worst of all had to be content with hastily improvised shelters of mud and thatch, or even to pass the bitter months of winter in tents. By the end of 1948 the number of the refugees exceeded 700,000: for the second time within ten years a tenth part of the whole nation was homeless. The country towns were packed with refugees: not a ruined cottage or a stable but sheltered two or three families. Some words from Thomas Alcock's *Travels in Russia, Persia, Turkey and Greece in 1828-29* might well have been written 120 years later: "Nothing in Greece", says this traveller, "can more forcibly give an idea of the war that has been carried on, than finding on inquiry that not a third of the residents in any place are natives of it, but only sojourners there, till security is afforded them in their own birth-places."

727 793 [792] [798] The parish clergy fled with their people to the comparative security of the towns, but the priest was a marked man and many failed to make good their escape. No less than 239 priests and monks were done to death by the Communists alone, and seventy-seven by the Germans, while a further forty-seven died at the hands of Bulgars, Italians or Albanian moslems. Of the total number of 363 the majority (297 to be precise) were parish priests: no single category of the population sustained heavier casualties in the slaughter of these years than the village *papades*.

793 798 "I triumphed", says De Quincey, "but infer not, reader, a condition of joy or exultation." Not all of those who died were men of the quality of the heroic parish priest of the village of Megarchis, Papa George Skrekas, who was crucified by the Communists on Good Friday, 1947. Nor, needless to add, did every Christian who suffered for the faith during the first three centuries of our era embrace death with the ardour of an Ignatius or the serenity of a Polycarp. The Church of Greece has ever been rich in martyrs, and there are not a few names—unknown though they be to Christendom at large—which have been added during the last ten years to the roll of those who will be remembered in the mountain dioceses whenever the Church gathers for the eucharist:

/65 cont./

Medical care. The only village in the area that has the best medical service is Megali Vrisi. The efforts of the nurse and the doctor slowly are gaining ground and more and more the people follow their principles of caring for the sick. The newly-erected hospital in the nearby city of Kilkis provides care for the inhabitants of the area free of charge. If the patient is very sick he usually is taken there, where he can find specialized doctors. 758 759 [178] [743]

The construction of the living houses is so poorly done in the village that the care of the sick under such conditions is hard. The windows are small and the mud floor with severe cold winds of the winter and no proper fuel to warm the house makes it harder yet to care for the sick. 758 362

The mutual assistance of relatives in sickness as well as of neighbors is great. People at times of /66/ great difficulties help each other, not only through labor but by giving each other food and even money. Especially is this characteristic of this people to share alike each other's burdens and partake actively in their grief and sorrow. 758 476 621

The Faith Healer. People of experience and cleverness perform certain magical performances that convince the people of their ability to command the spirits. Most of the inhabitants of Megali Vrisi believe them and spend money and time to visit them. People suffering from chronic diseases, or if born with defects of the body, or if unable to bear any child, find as the answer to their discouraged condition the faith healers. 755 [842]

Some Saints who perform miracles for donating to them; a lamb, a hen, a goat, or a cow, may, in return, act favorably for the patient. Priests praying for the sick or for the crippled are not uncommon. On special holidays, certain churches fill up with such sick and crippled people. Some sleep in the church for weeks without food and pray continuously to the Saint. Stories circulate that some one saw the Saint riding on the horse, are very common. Sometimes these saints actually do heal indirectly local pains, even of the partly crippled. Even doctors 755 782 776 [793] [787]

/68 cont./ reward. Whenever there is a tooth-ache, whether the tooth is good or bad, the remedy is to pull it out. Often the patient is tied up against a tree and three or four people hold him while the practical dentist ties a string around the tooth and pulls it out. /69/ Often the string breaks before the tooth is out. 164 [752]

It has become a custom to wash the hands and mouth after a meal. It is the raw vegetables, the hard-baked bread and the ignorance of the tooth paste and toothbrush that keep their teeth healthy and strong. [264] [515]

Sanitary privies. The sanitary privy is one of the urgent necessities of the family, but one seldom comes across it in any village. Megali Vrisi, having had the privilege of having a doctor and a nurse, started building new sanitary privies. Many farmers still use the old method of fencing a corner and placing two large stones for the people to stand on. No ditch whatsoever is prepared for this. Fortunately, the climate is dry and everything evaporates and dries. One of the causes for extensive intestinal diseases among the young was due to these old-fashioned privies. People are learning, more and more, the source of house flies and the breeding sources of diseases among their children. Even the present privies are not so safe, but have reduced the troubles considerably. 514 514 744

People who still cannot believe that diseases are caused by micro-organisms, do not fully appreciate the means to combat them. [753]

/70/ Health in relation to housing. As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, the houses were built by the farmers at a time of great necessity and there was no time to think about the sanitary side of the house. The farmers wanted a shelter for their families and thus built a square, one-room house with as few windows as possible, and with a small door to cut down the cost. Living conditions under such circumstances were naturally very unhealthy, since the whole family had to keep everything in the same room and have a family of five sleep in the same bed. 362 [513]

/70 cont./
Making use of their prosperous crop years, farmers have enlarged the houses and added more rooms and thus improved their houses. The usual type is a three room house, storeroom, kitchen and bedroom. The habit of the whole family sleeping in the same room still prevails. Most families have screened their houses against mosquitos and flies, but the floors still remain the same mud built.

PART VI Education

Various aspects of informal education. The people of Megali Vrisi are hungry for education and value its importance in their lives. When they arrived at their half-ruined village, before taking care of their own shelter, they built the school by sacrificing the lumber of their houses.

/71/ Church and school are the two outstanding institutions which influence more than anything else the lives of these people. More than 97 per cent of the Caucasians know how to read and write, and six among them have even completed their high school work. The Thracians on the other side are illiterate. Only 4 per cent of the older people know how to read and write, but the younger generation that has the chance to attend the school, know how to read and write.

The local grammar school includes six grades with one teacher. He divides his students into two groups, and half of them come in the morning and the other half in the afternoon. The teaching schedule is prepared by the Ministry of Education and the teacher is closely inspected by the regional inspector as to his ability to follow it. This heavy program hinders the teacher from taking active part in the village social life.

Teacher's position in the village. A teacher and a priest are highly honored and their presence in coffee houses is not desired. Besides the training he gives to the children at the school the teacher follows his students in their homes too. If a mother

9:Megas I, B-5,4 (no date) 1951 EH1 Greece EH1

PREFACE

At the present stage of the reconstruction of our country the building of houses is of colossal importance.

At no other time, since the reconstruction of liberated Greece began, after the 1821 Revolution, was there such a great opportunity for building activity in the Greek mainland as at present.

The 430.000 destroyed houses in our country, most of which are to be found in the countryside, form 24% of our total number of houses, and the great majority of these have been either totally destroyed or damaged beyond repair.

At the present moment, the attention of all our authorities is focussed on the best solution of the housing in the Greek countryside.

The question is of paramount importance and is much more difficult than that of reconstructing the urban centres where a different way of life allows the application of solutions usually common to all towns, and even to all countries.

But the problem is quite different in the countryside where the «land» factor and the «human» factor, free from the intense influence of civilization, have a direct bearing on the way of life, the methods of living and consequently the types of dwelling. It is for this reason that a great importance should be attached to all the forms of dwellings originating in Greek tradition. In this way we will be able to understand how similar problems have been faced previously by the same people and in the same surroundings.

The present survey by Prof. G. A. Megas, who is already known from his previous works on Thracian, Lemnian and Thessalian Houses, is the first attempt at a synthetic presentation of the whole problem of the Greek Popular House.

The problem is not an easy one.

The Greek house has developed through the centuries, under the influence of many civilizations on those physical factors which usually determine its form. The author achieves a global presentation of the problem in conjunction with the similar problems in the countries

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in order to help him in his activities; thus he creates deviations from the traditional type, variations from the original form. The scholar may see the solutions which the man of the people finds for the various problems connected with house construction, with storage of cattle foodstuffs, shelter of cattle and arrangement of space. He may see his very spiritual and productive forces in action and in full application. For, the methods and means which the popular builder uses in solving these problems, reflect the thought, the practical mind, the creative force, the sence of beauty of the man of the people. This is why it is difficult for me to understand how it is possible that a study of art and material life of the people can be separated from the whole folklore research, as if it was a separate subject; because the things as such are of great interest for folklore study as constituting elements of popular civilization studied by it, and on the other hand, because the man of the people, whose spiritual and creative forces are investigated by Folklore, is acting behind these things. 121 342*

Researches on the popular house are naturally of great importance both for ethnology and for the general history of civilization, but the same holds true for all the subjects of folklore research, especially for those transmitted from people to people.

It is evident that each effort to proceed to a general synthesis of the forms of the Greek house and of its relation to the houses of the other peoples of the Balkans and of Asia Minor assumes the collection of various and abundant comparative material, pertaining to the arrangement of the plan as well as to the methods of construction. I think however that such an attempt, at least as far as the Greek side is concerned, is not premature to-day.

The war and the occupation, and later the communist rebellion, supported from abroad, apart from the other calamities, had as a result the destruction of a great number of houses. The private houses, public buildings, schools, churches and communal buildings destroyed amount to 430.000. The destruction is so big that in future we shall know the architectural forms of some areas only by surveys made in those areas. 121 362 727 653

The urgent need to reconstruct the ruins and to rehabilitate the agricultural economy of the country, made necessary, even during the occupation, the reorganization of the Survey Office of the Town Planning Service, and the creation, immediately after the liberation, of the Ministry of Reconstruction, whose program of works includes the knowledge of the locally prevailing types and forms of popular

9:Megas I,B-5,4 (no date) 1951 EH1 Greece EH1

architecture, which would serve as a basis for the reconstruction of the villages. As a consequence, the rate of the surveys has quickened during the last years and, under the illuminating guidance of the General Director of this Ministry, the architect Mr. C. A. Doxiadis, most of the area of Greece was systematically surveyed, and the conclusions drawn from them are ready for publication. These conclusions were kindly put at my disposal and, together with surveys previously carried out by myself and other researchers the amount of data thus compiled may be considered as adequate to enable me to proceed to the more general study, outlined above.

It must be noted that almost everywhere in the Greek countryside besides the modern and more composite forms of houses, we can still see the simpler and older forms of the popular house which are adapted to the economy of the poorest class of peasants. Either because the house is an element essential for the dowry of the daughter, or because it is a custom that the bridegroom should build his own house, the father of the bride or the bridegroom are obliged to build even an elementary dwelling, a «hut», a «bungalow» or a house of one of the simplest forms prevailing in the area. And, as later the needs of life increase and the standards improve, together with the conceptions of the elementary conditions of a comfortable and healthy life, the house is extended or completed, or a new house is built, according to the more composite forms of housing prevailing in the district. Thus, in many parts of Greece, we can follow step by step the evolution of popular architecture, noting the intermediate points which it followed on its evolutionary process.

I have tried, as far as possible, to render this evolution graphically on summary plates, appended at the end of this book. One can find each of these forms in the explanations given at them. (1).

After examining the modern Greek house and comparing it with the houses of ancient Greece, we shall proceed to the study of the houses of neighbouring countries in order to show their relation to the Greek house.

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1) For a complete understanding of the text, sometimes even these plates are not sufficient. There is need to refer to complete drawings and figures of my previous publications mentioned herein.—I am greatly indebted to the service of the Ministry of Reconstruction and especially to architect Mr. Eleutherios Skepers, who has compiled my drawings. I also express my thanks to Mr. Zenon Papadopoulos who did the translation of this book; and to Mr. H. Lidderdale who was kind enough as to go through the English text.